

PETERS
ENLARGEMENT
VPON THE PRAYERS
OF THE CHVRCH.

By
Master HARRIS.

Psal. 34. 17.

*The Righteous cry and the Lord heareth and
deliuereth them out of all their troubles.*



LONDON.

Printed by I. D. for Iohn Bartlett, and are to
be sould at the golden Cup in the Gold-
smiths Rowe in Cheapside.

1634.

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FINAL ARGUMENT
UPON THE PRAYERS
OF THE CHURCH

BY

M. HARRIS

1747



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To the Reader.



His Sermon (thus made vp with mine owne and others notes) I now submit to Authority and Censure, for substāce, I yeelde heere is no more then what was deliuered, whether no lesse I haue not now to say, for circumstance (I yeeld to the allegation) I acknowledge it seasonable. The times shall euer bee cleared by prayer whensoever they looke sadly vpon vs. Our Brethren abroad cry stil in the Churches words. *The* *Jer. 8.10.* *harvest is past, and the Summer is ended, and we are not holpen, and wee (me thinks) should add with Ieremie verse 21. I am sore vexed for the hurt of the daughter of my people, I am heauie, astonishment hath taken me ; Is there no balme at Gilead. &c,* At home, howsoever the Lord hath beene gracious to vs in the scarcitie, yet we may

The Epistle

Hag. 2. 20.

Psal. 65. 9.
10. 11.

Demonol.
l. 3 c. 1.
ad finem.

Sir W. Ral.
preface.

in most places, take vp the Prophets words in another sence, *Is the seede yet in the Barn? as yet the Trees haue not beene deliuere.d of their burthen?* Looke into the 65 Psalme, and thou shalt find that it is the Lord that finds both ground and seede, that giues both growth and ripening to the Corne, and therefore wee should waite vpon him with our presents of praise & prayer, this were enough to make vs pray, but this is the least of many motiues, for *Reader* thou seest the times, the World is now all care and tongue, the most giuen with the *Athenians* to little els then to heare and tell newes, (vncertaine newes, the Authour of all lies as his Maiestie hath told vs) the rest are willing also to heare, and to heare Gods Truth, not Fables, and therein they doe but as *S. Iames* would haue them, so as they would add doing to hearing as hee commaunds. But alas, whilst we only professe and discourse of Religion, we driue the practise of Religion out of the world, as one too iustly complaines. It is lamentable to consider the little vse that is made of Gods Ordinances in most places; Preachers too often (I tremble

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tremble to speake it) be vsed like post horses, spurd on till they be spent, and then a fresh is called for, in the meane the world sits still and thinks to be saued for hearing. Reader, Mourn for this, weepe for this, for this boades a Iudgement, the Lord will reckon for the blood of his Prophets spent as well as shed. To these reasons, it will not be hard for thee to add more, looke within thee, and round about thee, and so stirre vp thy selfe to this exercise of Prayer, an exercise (I can assure thee) of vnspeakable strength and comfort, an exercise without which thou canst not liue, and by which thou mayest liue in the mouth of death. Beleeue it, wert thou in an estate, more desperate then death, in a place worse then hell, yet if there thou couldest pray truely, thou shouldst find comfort and strength beyond hope, for Prayer is better then our hopes, and yet God is better to vs then our prayer. First, for that which is publique, follow him who was no time-server, make no sinall account of publique prayers. Secondly, for priuat, pause before thou speak, remember who spake it, if a man would

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not deliuer an Oration to a Prince *ex tempore* and sodainely, it will not become vs to open our mouths rashly before our maker, secondly, keepe touch with God: first, for extraordinary and incidental occasions, be sure to keepe thy selfe in such a state and condition of soule, as that euer thou canst recollect thy selfe, and call in all the powers of soule for this businesse vpon a short warning: secondly, for ordinary times, so neare as may bee, faile not of thine houre, when the Clocke strikes the Schollar runs to his booke, thou must to God leauing al, there tender thy selfe, though not alwaies alike fit, and so be in the way and place of preferment, if words will not come, sigh, *God heares the sighing of his prisoners*, if thou canst not sigh, breath, God hath an eare for that, *Lam 3. 56*. Howeuer, there be, there stand, and the child that stands before his father and appears in his place at supper time with his trencher in his hand, speakes with his countenance, and speeds accordingly: he was wise who said, they pray not altogether of fashion, who see their infirmitie in praying and are grieved for it; the worst prayers

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prayers that wee make (to our owne sence I meane) speede euer best, and then wee pray most happily, when wee arise most humbled.

Thirdly, when thou hast prayed, do not as children, who neuer looke after their arrow; but as *Daniel! cap. 9. 1.* take notice of thine enlargements in prayer and of thy successe after, write downe time and place as the Prophet doth, and so helpe thy selfe in future times by former experiments. I see this Porch growes wide, and therefore I wil conclude, if thou be acquainted with prayer, thou knowest there is more in it then can be expressed, if thou bee not acquainted, grow acquainted, and thou shalt find me true, if thou wantest furthest motiues and directions, I commend (in this hast) to thee who art but a poore English priuate man. First, for the promises (where of the heart must chew before prayer) the *Treatise of faith.* secondly, for motiues, the *Epistle to the key Heauen.* thirdly, for cases of Conscience and directions after prayer, 2. *Treatises on Ephe 6. viz. the spiritual Armour,* and now after directions and exhortations, what remains but practise, in stead of others

The Epistle to the Reader

thers prailing and enterdealing in State-bu-
sines, do thou pray, pray for thy Sovereign,
for his seede, for the Churches, for thy self,
for thy charge, and vse no more words a-
gainst mens sinnes, then thou wilt make
prayers for their soules in secret, if thou
wilt haue comfort in thy wordes : Thus
much of this, Now Reader to thee, if these
plaine notes passe the Presse, know that I
neither did entēd their publishing before I
preached them, nor can intend notwith-
standing their refining since ; if the world
may be bettered by them, or by any thing
I can doe, I haue enough, onely I desire
mercy and equitie from my friends, those
notes of mine which they haue, I will my
selfe (after my publique Ministerie) now
shortly revise, let no man doe so ill an of-
fice as to thrust out other mens notes with-
out their privitie, especially his, who can
doe nothing worthy this Age.

Ro: Harris.



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Acts 12. 6. 7.

And when Herod would haue brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two souldiers, bound with two chaines; and the Keepers before the doore, kept the prison.

And behold the Angell of the Lord came vpon him, and a light shined in the prison: and hee smote Peter on the side, and raised him vp, saying; Arise vp quickly, And his chaines fell off from his hands, &c.



ERE is a storie of *Peters*,
1. Imprisonment. 2. En-
largement: With the
cause of the one, and
meanes of the other. *He-*
rod hauing vexed some,
slaine a second, now com-
mits the third; and all
this to gratifie the Iewes.

Peter thus committed, is bailed by the Church, or
rather remooved and freed by petition; they pray
heartily for him, in the 5. verse, and they speed as
B happily

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happily, whilst they are praying, God giues in the prisoner amongst them. The manner of his delivery is here reported, and that was very strange, beyond *Herods* purpose, the prisoners expectation, the Keepers meaning, all mens hopes: *Herod* held his purpose he had begun, and the next morning he meant an end of him, *Peter* had made his conclusion to morrow (thinkes he) (for messages past betweene him and the Church, which spent this night in Prayer for him, and therefore knew the danger) I must be put to it, therefore I will strengthen my selfe to night: The Keepers stood vpon their guard, and resolved that no *Peter* should passe them: yet is *Peter* delivered, and how I pray you? God remoues all impediments, for nothing was in readinesse.

First, for man, entrance was there none, therefore God sends an Angell, and there was no stop against him.

Next, in the darke, it was hard to find which was which; God directs an Angell to him, and hee comes vpon him, and misses not the man, though bound to the same chaine with two others, as in strict imprisonments they vsed to doe.

Thirdly, they were in the darke, and that was ill for noyse; The Angell brings his darke lanthorne with him, and shines to *Peter* and none else.

Fourthly, the prisoner can doe little for himselfe, he is *asleepe*, the Angell wakes him; he is *laid*, the Angell raises him; he is *amazed*, the Angell directs him; he is *bound*, the Angell vnties him; hee knowes not *where he is*, the Angell guides him; hee
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is to passe through sundry *difficulties*, the Angell *conducts* him through them all, and so dismisses him.

Wee will vse no more words about a plaine *Storie*, but acquaint you with our meditations: they containe the successe of the Churches prayers; *they prayed for Peter*, the Angell thereupon is sent to *Peter*: where see; 1. *How the Angell findes him*: 2. *How the Angell delivers him*.

For the first, he findes him *sleeping*, in the midst of feares and foes: From whence was this sleepe, was it worldly sorrow that caused it, or was it carnall securitie?

Answe. In doubtfull things charitie supposes the best; so should we, worldly sorrow causes sleepe, but how? when it is not extreame, and that sleepe is ioynd with starting: carnall securitie will cause sleepe, but why should we charge *Peter* with that at this time; his sleepe came from a better cause, he was at peace with God, he had the Churches prayers for him, the cause for him, his conscience for him, God and his Angels for him; he could die but once, and for one death hee was prepared: hence his boldnes before, Chapters 4. and 5. hence his confidence, here he resolved with *Dauid*, *I will lay me downe and sleepe*, and withall, God gaue rest to his beloued, as it is in the *Psalmes*, rest more then ordinary to his minde, to his body: hence the Angell can hardly awake him, and being awaked, he is not terrified, as a guiltie person would haue beene in this case: doe then but consider, 1. The man. 2. His behaviour in like cases. 3. The time and circum-

circumstances. 4. The exercises of the Church for him. 5. The messenger, and message sent to him. 6. The manner of his behaviour when he is awaked, and you will see that his sleepe grew not from distemper, but from strength of faith and comfort.

Now to the Points.

Doct. 1.

Esay 55.

James 5.

Where first from the order, see the power of ioynt prayers, they beare downe all before them, and prevaile in heaven and earth, as the Word that comes from heaven, prospers in the thing whereunto it is sent; so the word that goes to heaven, the prayers of the Church strike vp to God, there they lie at his gates, and never will away without their errand, and when they are answered, then they come downe with authoritie, and raigne over all impediments below, witnesse this Story: *Peter* is committed, the persecuters are resolute, the foes many, the friends few, meanes none but God, to God the Church goes; the enemies plotte, the Church prayes; they shut the prison doores, the Church opens heavens doores; so ther's old tugging for the prisoner, but the Church winnes him. God, to let them see what prayers bee, sends him to them while they are praying; there, saith God (if you will take no deniall) there he is; thereby pointing vs to the meanes of his deliverance: we need not many words for prooffe of this, *James* saith, *The prayer of one righteous man prevailes much; if of one, what of twentie! what of an hundred! and he instances in Elijah, Hee alone could open and shut heaven,* then well may many open and shut prisons on earth; nay adde further, the ioynt prayers of

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unbelievers and hypocrites haue done much: when
 heathenish *Ninive* fasted and prayed, God heard; *Jonah 3.*
 when false *Rehoboam* humbled himselfe and his
 people, God was intreated; how much more shall *2 Chron. 12.*
 the faithfull prayers of the Church prevaile, pre-
 vaile (I say) both for the preventing and removing
 evils, and obtaining and keeping of good things:
 What shall we instance the life of *Asa, Iehosaphat,*
Hezekiah, when was it otherwise, when did the
 Church of God euer ioyne in a common petition
 to God but they sped? no instance to the contrary.

No marvell, this exercise is well grounded and *Reas. 1.*
 warranted, it hath the warrant of a Precept: 1. *Pray James 5.*
for one another; call vpon me.

2. The warrant of a promise, *I will deliuer thee. Psal 50.*

3. The warrant of experience, never any yet v-
 sed it but they prevailed.

Prayers are presents very welcome to God, he *Reas. 2.*
 prefers them to all sacrifices, being immediate wor-
 ships of his Maiestie; Let me heare thy voyce it is
 pleasant: No father loues the voyce of his children,
 like as God loues the voyce of his Church; *Tis his Cant. 2. 14.*
musicke and perfume. Rev. 5. 8.

3. The parties are very deare who tender them, *Reas. 3.*
 God loues his Church aboue all creatures, he gaue
 his Sonne for her, and therefore her sutes shall haue
 acceptance: *Let me see thy face, its comely; Esther ne- Cant. 2. 14.*
 ver pleased *Ahasueros* so well, as the Church plea-
 seth Christ.

4. The parties from and through whom they *Reas. 4.*
 are presented, please: They are indited and abbet-
 ted by the holy Ghost, *Rom. 8. tendred by Christ Rom. 8.*

Jesus

Iesus, and shall these be denied? adde to this:

5. The party to whom they are directed, to God, who is all truth, mercy, grace, wisdom, power, and shall not these prevaile? Prayers set God on worke, and all in God, his wisdom, his power, his Angels, and what then can hinder?

Vse 1. Looke backward, and call to minde your sinne this day, see, many a *Peter* hath beene in prison, and prayers were not made by the Church; many a member sicke, and prayers were not made by the Elders; yea many a Church distressed, *Bohemia* afflicted, the *Palatinate* and *Valtoline* distressed, yet we did not pray; the enemy could curse, but wee did not pray, and therefore how iustly might God distresse and leaue vs destitute of his helpe, and the Churches prayers?

2. Looke forward, and preserve and improve this your interest in God, let no *Peter*, no Preacher, no Christian, no neighbour lie in the chaines by you (whether in the chaines of sicknesse, or pover- tie, or debt, or paine, or sinne, or temptation) but doe you retriue him: you haue a key that will open any locke, a medicine that will heale any wound, a weapon that will prevaile in any place; draw this weapon, vse this medicine: if men be sicke, pray them whole; if poore, pray them rich; if sad, pray them merry.

But is this so easily done? yes verily by the whole Church; as it is for the outward estate when one is very poore, it is hard for two or three to set him vp againe, but nothing for a thousand; and when one is in a pit, it is much for one, but not for many

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many to pull him out: see here, it is long of vs that men lie so long vnder their burdens, would wee ioyntly commend them to God, our prayers would take, mens chaines would off, true spirituall chaines: Why if so, were it not worth the while? what, may wee ease our brethren of temptations, of passions, of lusts, and will wee not? But for outward crosses, saith not Saint *James*, let the prayers of the Church heale the sicke; saith not the story, the prayers of the Church procured *Peters* liberty? But say they bee not alwayes delivered? yet it is good to get the crosses mitigated, sanctified, sweetened, and something will be done if wee pray; doe this then or nothing: perhaps you will excuse other negligences, you would visit your sicke neighbour, but you question, his disease, your welcome; you would relieue your poore neighbours, but you haue it not; why there is no Christian man but hee hath an interest in God, a spirit of prayer; lift vp a prayer for thy brethren, if thou canst doe nothing else, and this will doe thee and him good, prayer in this case for others, is a cleerer evidence of grace, then for our selues.

Heere is comfort and encouragement, comfort for our selues, if members of the Church, if wee bleede with her, if we pray for her, if wee say, *If I forget thee, O Ierusalem, then let my right hand forget her cunning*: the comfort is great, wee haue that which Saint *Paul* thirsted for, the prayers of the Church; and this is a priuiledge worth ten worlds, and a comfort beyond all apprehension, when a man lookes round about him and can say, there is

Ob.
Ans.

Ob.
Ans.

a towne, I haue some prayers there, there is another, I haue stocke going there, nay in every shire, every nation, some that bee enlarged when I am barren, some quickened when I am dull, and I am an adventurer in the Churches shippe, I haue a stocke in her treasure, and an interest in her prayers; this keepe the head aboue water, and preserues from sinking.

4. For encouragement, to pray for the Church, would Gods people enter into a holy league, and tye themselves in their severall closets, to spend so much time weekly, or dayly in prayer, for some particular person, or place, Church, or Nation; I wonder how they should misse; tell mee where euer the Churches ioynt prayers did ever mis-carry, or proue abortiue? in what place, in what case, for what people? prayers haue beene made for men out of the Church, and haue sped, witnesse *Ninivie*; for men in the Church (good men, bad men) and haue sped; prayers haue beene made by Land, and haue prevailed; on the Seas by *Ianab*, and haue sped; they haue prevailed vnder the earth, in dens, and dungeons, and caues; prayers haue been made for sicke men and haue holpe them, for dying men, for poore men, for captiues, for prisoners, and haue holpen; for men against persecution, against temptation, against sorrow, against beasts, against men, against diuels: prayers haue beene omnipotent heretofore, why not now?

Ob.

Ob. Why now, if we were as others, Gods hand (wee knowe) is not shortened, his eare not heauie; but our sinnes, our crying ripe sinnes, hinder good things from vs?

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Ans. Why therefore set against those sinnes by prayer, cast out your owne, cry downe other mens, out-cry them.

Ans.

Ob. Oh but they cry loud.

Ob.

Ans. Yet prayer hath the stronger voyce, the blood of Christ speakes better things then bloody sins, &c. Let *Sodome* yeeld ten holy men, and shee shall bee spared, let one *Elijah* stand vp for stiffe-necked Israell, and one *Amos* plead for rebellious Iudah, and God will shew mercy.

Ans.

Gen. 18.

James 5.

Amos 7.1.2.

Ob. True indeed, if we had such as they, but our prayers are weake and faint.

Ob.

Ans. 1. They were men subiect to like passions. 2. The prayer of the righteous is prevailing. 3. These here mentioned were new converts, yet prevailed with God for *Peter*.

Ans.

Iam. 5.16.17.

Ob. Oh but here the whole Church ioyned : if all *Israel* might meete from *Dan* to *Beersheba*, there might be some hope.

Ob.

Ans. We may, and doe more then these might ; 1. we may meet in publique assemblies euery Sabbath : 2. these were but few that lived in the darke, and met in the night, and in *Hesters* time in their severall families, and the whole State was then against the truth, and against the Scriptures, and all religion was disgraced ; yet then they prevailed, much more we now.

Ans.

Ob. But now it is too late, many Churches abroad be quite scattered, many men at home haue their backs and hearts quite broken, with wants, temptations, discouragements.

Ob.

Ans. Whilest God calls in his word, it is not too late,

Ans.

C

late, God is vsed to see men sinking before he sets in, their extremitie is his opportunitie; when *Peter* is within one night of the sword, then is his time.

Ob. 30

Ob. But I haue waited, and see no successe?

Ans. 1.

Ans. So did the Church, they pray for *Peter* this weeke, the next, and the next, the doores be still shut, the chaines be still on; well now they haue but one night more to waite, they waite that, but ere morning all is wonne: If then we haue but one day, one night, one houre to spend; hope, pray, waite, that day, that night, that houre, God will be seene in the mount: deliverance shall come if prayer goe on the errand; it ever was so, ever shall be so, dispute not but beleue; there is who prayes and speakes not, & there is too that speakes, who prayes not; if thou wilt pray, thou must open thy needs to God, as thy Father, through Christ, God-man as thy Mediatour, from God the holy Ghost, as the inditer of thy prayers: if thou wilt pray, thy heart must be 1. emptied of purposes of sinne: 2. broken: 3. purged from guile by faith; which faith must then worke, before thou beginnest; say with *David*, *I will call*, and *God will answer mee*; and when thou hast done, conclude, I haue spoken, and shall in due time and manner be answered; thus doe, and be sure that thou neither begin nor end a lawfull petition (of such onely we speake) before thou art aware, let faith enter thy sute, and end, and subscribe it, and thou prevailest.

Psal. 66. 18.

Psal. 86. 7.

And the 56. 9.

Now to particulars.

How findes the Angell Peter? Sure he cannot sleepe this night, being vpon his life to morrow, and in
all

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all likelihood knowing of it by the Church, howsoever, not sure of life one day to an end, but like enough to be sent for at an houres warning, as *John Baptists* head was. Notwithstanding all this, *Peter* sleeps as soundly as ever in his life, and wakes without terrour; whence was this, from corruption? no; from naturall courage? no, when *Peter* was younger, and therefore naturally bolder, he was a distard: whence then? consider the reasons before, and it will be found, that it was from speciall comfort and confidence in God, which comfort most attends prisons and persecutions: here see the strength of spirituall peace and comfort.

The Lord hath comforts for his children, that *Doct. 1.* will quiet and support them in any feares & straits, his consolations will make a man sleepe without a bed; live almost without a soule: They will make one bold in danger, quiet in trouble, live in the iawes of death: *The ioy of the Lord is strong*, saith *Nehe. 8.* *Nehemiah*, strong indeed that will carry a man over all: *Peter* had a strong heart, that can thus sleepe, thus wake, that can looke vpon Chaines, vpon Prisons, vpon Tyrants, vpon Torments, vpon Angels; (good and bad) and never breake his sleepe for the matter. *Pauls* ioyes were strong, that made him sing *Aet. 16.* *in the stocks*: *Dauids* saith strong, that made him say, *I will lye downe and sleepe, I will not feare though* *Psal. 3.* *ten thousand rise up against me*: those were strong and strange ioyes that supported *Dauid* in all his feares, and made him say, *In the multitude of my thoughts,* *Psal. 94. 10.* *thy comforts glad my soule*: Those strong that triumphed over, rackings, mockings, scourgings, &c. as

in the eleventh to the *Hebrewes*.

1. Q. Whence
these com-
forts.

Reas. 1.

Quest. But whence comes their strength?

Because they be Gods ioyes, the ioyes of the Spirit, derived immediately from the fountaine; and things be purest and strongest there.

2. Because spirituall, for as spirits are more active and powerfull then bodies, so spirituall things then bodily and naturall.

3. These ioyes are most certaine and durable, these overcome and out-live all crosses, and all other comforts.

4. They are al-sufficient, and borrow no helpe from creatures: Nature and Art worke with instruments, and by meanes, they cannot support without meate, strengthen without sleepe, give sleepe without warmth, nor warmth without a bed, &c. But God can beyond meanes, without means, work comfort, make one see in the darke, live in death.

2. Q. What.

Ans. 1.

Quest. But what be these comforts of God?

Ans. Precious promises applyed by God in due season, and brought home to the heart, which revive the spirits more then any balme; and these promises come thicke vpon *Peter* now: He thinketh, hath not God said; that *the fighting of prisoners comes to him*, that he bottles up all our teares, that we should cast our care vpon him, and he will care for vs, that in six and seven troubles, they shall not come neare me, that in fire and water he will be with me, & did not I heare my Saviour say, *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake*; reade not I how *David* said, *I will lie downe and sleepe*, and therefore I will doe so too.

2. Strengthening graces, God poures the spirit
of

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of faith, patience, power, courage, into his, in due time; and they raise the heart, as wine the fainting spirits; every saving grace is healing, is strengthening.

3. Hourely experience of Gods care and providence; and a childe never sees the loue of his mother so much as when he is sicke, so Gods children, &c.

Now that makethem plucke vp their feete with *Jacob*, and say with *Paul*, *I know whom I have trusted*; and with the Church, *Thou wilt guide vs to death*; and after (as *David* addes) *receiue to glory*.

4. Speciall peace of conscience, and ioy of the holy Ghost, by new expressions of Gods fauour, and ravishments of heaven: then God opens heaven, and they see their life and crowne, and so are carried over all.

Quest. When doth God thus comfort his?

3. Q. When

Ans. When they most need it, as then the mother brings out her preserues, when the childe is sicke: first, when they be most humbled and emptie of themselves; therefore after greatest humiliations come greatest consolations, as *David*, *Abraham*, and others ever found.

2. But specially in the day of tryall and persecution, the more the Devill bestirres him, the more God bestirres him: thus the sweetest nights that ever *Jacob* spent were in the field, and so for *Peter*; *Gen 28. and 32. chap.* and when had *David* those large affections to rise at midnight, when was the Word so sweete, but *Psalm 119.* when his troubles were bitter?

The Vse is double, 1. get these comforts, we get

Vsa.

C 3

aqua

aqua vite ready against qualmes; Bezoar-stone, and cordials against fits: but the cordials that helpe all, is the holy Ghost, the Comforter; Art is blind, and often posed; Nature weake, and often foyled; (like a bow that must not be drawne beyond compasse) onely grace and spirituall comfort is invincible: get this, and you may sleepe in a dungeon, live in the darke, want all, and yet have all; want these, and a flea may breake your sleepe; and a hand-writing dash your mirth in the midst of all friends.

Dan. 5.

Rev. 2. 10.

1 Cor. 1.

Act. 5. 19. 4. 13

vers. 18. But when put vpon it, heare his voyce, see his face, he can be as quiet, as comfortable, as well in prison as ever.

Ob.

Ob. Oh but I finde my selfe afraid of words?

Ans.

Ans. So was *Peter* at first.

Ob.

Ob. Oh but, saith our Saviour, beware of men.

Ans.

Ans. No man so malicious as God is mercifull, so perillous as God is pitifull. Oh but say we lived where

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where we should lie in cold irons, in the darke, bee halfe pined, starved; who can beare these? *Peter* can, any can, when God calls them to it.

O but say we were put to the fiery tryall, flames are intolerable and mercileffe. O but flames are in Gods hands, *Daniel 3*. Chapter: againe, Martyrs haue had more comfort there, then in all their liues before. Oh but some of them haue cryed out of paines: And doe not men so who die in their beds too? but God hath borne them through these, and made them amends.

O get then inward strength, and that will overcome all feares, all torments; conclude wee with that good Martyr, if God callever any of his to any such sufferings, hee will either weaken the flame or strengthen their faith; hee hath promised (that, which let vs liue and die in; to wit) that he will not tempt beyond strength: *And hee is able to doe exceeding abundantly aboue all that wee can speake or thinke.* 2 Cor. 10.

Assure your selues, the feare of persecution is more then persecution it selfe; therefore I speake to your feares, for there is none (through Gods mercie) with vs I am sure to bee felt (I thinke) to bee feared.

The same night, &c. That the Lord doth often hold his people long in suspence, for those things which hee meanes to giue them; hee is to our seeming slow, but sure; sure, but slow; thus hee was as good as his word to *Abraham*, hee gaue him a sonne, but hee held him off to the last houre; hee kept touch with his posterity, brought them out of Egypt

Doct. 3.

Nal. 105. 19.

Dan 9.

Egypt, but he deferred it till the last day; his bond was almost forfeited, yet he paid it before the Sun-
set, *Exod. 12. 17. 41.* Thus *Ioseph* was long in pri-
son, yet at the appointed time brought forth; and
Israel long in captivity, prayers were made, and yet
Daniel could heare no answer till night was vpon
him; *Jacob* wrestles till day, &c. so also the woman
of Canaan, *Matt. 15.*, and the Church heere: in all
which places wee see, that God is mindfull of his
day. 2. That hee deferres sometime till the last
houre be running.

Reas.

The reason of this delay is manifold. 1. God
would turne our eyes backward, and make vs say;
O it is iust God should deferre me, I haue deferred
him; hee called and I would not heare; prayed me
again, againe, and againe, and I would not an-
swer; therefore it is equall I should call and cry,
and not be heard.

2. God hereby would sharpen our prayers for
the present, therefore hee seemes deafe, because we
should speake out; therefore slow, because we should
be earnest; thus *Daniel* interprets it: God defers
him, this is (saith hee) but to try me, therefore he
spits vpon his hands, and takes better hold; O Lord
forgiue, saith hee, O Lord heare, O Lord open, and
poures so many petitions, and arguments vpon
God, that there is no resistance; thus *Jacob*, he sees
the day comming vpon him, and he had made no-
thing of it all night, and therefore now he sets to it,
Goe, saith hee, *I will not let thee goe without a bles-
sing.*

3. Hereby hee prepares vs for the future recei-
uing

Peters Enlargement.

17

uing of his comforts; thus he humbles vs, thus he enlargeth vs, thus fits vs for thankfulness, the more blessings cost vs, the better we will prize them, and prayse God for them: adde to this, that these repulses drive vs to further searches, as the Israelites at *Ai*, and *Gibeah*. Ios. 7.
Judg. 20.

Doth the Lord thus long deferre sometime his intended comforts and answers? Let's know the courses of his providence, and wait vpon him: behold the husbandman waits; when he hath sowne his seede, he doth not looke to reape and sow all in a day, his Corne is first buried, yea it dies, yea it growes downward, before it comes vward, and when it is vp, receiues many a snib and checke, yet he waites? And why? because he hath experience: so must wee, when we haue sowne our seed; say we bury our prayers, say to our seeming they die, say they grow downward, backward, say all things seeme to be worse after prayer with vs then before, yet waite; why, we haue experience of our owne and other mens successe, never did men sow this seed, but they had a croppe, though a late harvest, yet a harvest. Vse 1.

Ob. Oh but I haue prayed exceeding long. *Ob.*

Ans. How long? *Isaack* prayed twentie yeares for a childe, before he sped, *Abraham* thirtie; before he sped; *Abrahams* posteritie were foure hundred yeares in captivitie, before they were delivered; the Church thirsted for Christ, one thousand, two thousand, three thousand yeares, before they had him: How many thousands, hundreds, scores of yeares, hast thou waited? *Ans.*

D

Ob.

Ob. *Ob.* O but I haue tryed all my friends, vsed all meanes, prayed my selfe, and got others to speake too, and yet no helpe?

Ans. *Ans.* And might not *Peter* say as much? not a Christian in Ierusalem, but had spoken, and spoken often, and yet he stickes.

Ob. *Ob.* O but matters with me are worse and worse, the more I pray against povertie, the poorer I am; the more I pray for patience, the worse I am; the more I pray for faith, the lesse I haue; the more I pray against passions and temptations, the more they flie in my face.

Ans. *Ans.* Is not this as we sayd, that the corne must goe backward, before it come forward; was it not so with *Abraham* and *Sarah*, the longer they prayed the elder they waxed, and so vnfit for issue.

Ob. *Ob.* O but my sinnes grow stronger by prayer.

Ans. *Ans.* Not so, thou feelest it more then before; it is not because sinne is stronger, but thou sounder; againe, these motions of sinne, be not motions of life, but symptoms of death; as the fowle struggles, and sprunts most when the head is off: the panges of death be now vpon thy lusts, take comfort.

Ob. *Ob.* O but now your comforts come too late, the date is out for me.

Ans. *Ans.* Why? hath God sayd pray no more, as to *Ieremie*, hath he stopt thy mouth? so long as God saith, pray; so long as the spirit within thee saith, pray; so long as Gods people haue hearts to pray; never say it is too late to pray: if *Peter* be out by midnight, or by day-breake, it is as well as if he had beene out a moneth before,

Obi

Peters Enlargement.

19

Ob. O but delayes breakes the heart.*Ob.*

Ans. But note the end of delayes, they are never to deny or frustrate, but to fit, and to quicken: make these vses of delayes, and then if thy sute be not honest, never begin it; if it be, never leaue it: learne of husbandmen, when they pull downe a tree, or lift at some blocke, if they cannot stirre it, they call in helpe, if it come not at the first pull, they pull againe, if not then, ha, againe; if not then, ha, once more; at last they feele it comming, and then it comes amaine: learne of *Elijah*, hee prayed for raine, having prayed lookes about him, nothing comes; he prayed againe, nothing comes; hee prayed againe, nothing comes; at length, O Master (saith his servant) I see a cloud, but it is but little; Is it a cloud? then once more to it, and by and by the heavens were masked with cloudes: learne of these men, *Peter* sliques in the dungeon, one lifts, he cannot stirre him; try you (saith he) to a second, to a third, try a fourth, a fift; at length heaven stirres, the chaines stirre, and *Peter* comes in amongst them: learne of Christ himselfe; the widdow dealt with a Iudge, not a Father; a bad Iudge, shee was alone, a simple Orator, yet she preuailes: learne of beggers, they haue no command, no promise, no acquaintance, no Art; and yet will stand it out; the master chides, the begger stands it out; the dame chides, he stands still; the servants come, and say they dare not serue him; the children say we must not, and yet he will not away. O Lord, helpe our faith, how weake be we, if ha-
ving precept, promise, kindred, Gods servants,

1 Kin. 18. 43.

Luke 18.

Peters Enlargement.

Gods Sonne on our sides, we will be put off with a delay: well (as I said) so long as a night, an houre, a minute, is left, pray; one night may compasse that which an hundred before could not.

It followeth, *An Angell, &c.*

Doff. 4.

2 Pet. 1.

Reas. 1.

Esa. 4. 5.

The Lord hath ever meanes at hand for his servants; comfort and deliverance, if set on worke; well might *Peter* say, *The Lord knoweth how to deliuer his, &c.* He is never at a stand, if they know how to pray, he knoweth how to comfort.

In himselfe he is al-sufficient, infinite in wisdom, to invent meanes; in power, to act them; and if need be, to create more.

2. He is the Lord of Hosts, the Lord of every creature; if our worke lie in the Seas, he is Lord of the Seas; if on the Land, he is Lord there; if in Prison he beareth the keyes of every Gaole; if heavens can helpe vs, he commands them; if winds, if beasts, if friends, if strangers, if foes, if Angels; the Lord hath the command of all persons, things, and places.

Use 1.

Psal. 37.

For comfort, roule thy selfe vpon God, cast thy care vpon him, he will bring it to passe; is thy burden, povertie? cast it vpon him, and he will helpe it; is it sinne, feare, sorrow, whatsoever it be, he can beare it, and discharge thee?

This Sermon
was made in
the depth of
the dearth,

Oh but I see no meanes, I owe so much; so many in my familie, and no meanes.

This is as if they should haue said, If we had a friend in the Court, to moue *Herod*; if a friend in the Watch, to bribe him; if in the prison, to see him; then something might be done, but now all
meanes

meanes faile vs. No, no : God hath meanes beyond our sight, if men cannot doe it, Angels can and shall : and if no man will pay the Widdowes debt, God will : if no body else will feede *Elish*, the Ravens shall : what doe wee talke of meanes ? all meanes are shut vp in God. 2 King. 4.

Ob. O but my case is desperate, it is not possible to helpe me. *Ob.*

Ans. Now we shall haue a tale of impossibilities : And why not possible ; shall any thing be impossible to God ? *Ans.* Zach. 8. 6.

Ob. O but there be an hundred blockes in my way. *Ob.*

Ans. But what is in his way, that makes his way through the seas, stones, wood, iron, &c ? goe to the prison, there is a blocke, a guard ; passe that guard, there is a blocke, a doore ; passe the doore, there is another, a chaine ; passe the chaine, there is another, an iron gate. O but what of this, if they can breake through all hinderances of vnbeliefe, discouragements to prayer : God will breake thorow these and a thousand more, to their comfort. O but God workes no wonders now. No ? his Name is wonderfull still ; his power as great as ever, his wisdom as deepe as ever, his promises as good, his loue as much to his as ever, our need as much, our interest as good, our Saviour as good ; all things stand as before : if wee can vse former meanes, we shall finde former successe, and God will doe abundantly aboue all that we can speake or thinke : wee haue the Lords promise for this, *Ephesians* 3. 20. and *Esay* 42. 16. *I will make darke*

Ans.
Esa. 43. 16.
Marke our
Saviours col-
lection from
Manna to
bread.
Mat. 4.
Deut. 8. 3.
Esa. 9. 6.

Peters Enlargement.

light, and crookednesse straight : wee haue had our owne experience, let any man that hath had any acquaintance with God and this holy dutie, tell me when prayers were not succesfull ; when didst thou ever speake to thy heavenly Father, but he did answer thee with some ease, some comfort ? When didst thou ever pray, but thy heart was thereby somewhat lightened ? and if thou canst not but say with *David*, in the same day I asked, I was thus far answered, *That my heart was strengthened, Ps. 139. 3.* doe not faile to conclude with *David*, *Though I walke in the midst of troubles, yet (vpon prayer) I shall be revived, 7. and God will perfect his mercies in me for ever, 8.*

Thus wee haue dispatcht some meditations : more we haue, but they must be onely named ; as
 1. *Herod* would, but could not bring forth *Peter*, to tryall and execution : men be but men, and must doe as they may ; for what they would doe against the Church, nor they, nor all the Divells in hell can doe.

2. The Lord can giue sleepe and peace in any place, at any time, in any company.

3. Gods best servants and messengers, are sometimes yoked with vilest offenders, &c.

4. Gods best creatures are the Churches servants : Angels.

5. Lastly, the Lord can quickly shake his out of their chaines, rags, feares, fetters, &c. But what doe I meane thus to excede : Brethren I would faine haue you more thirſtie of your time, doe you not waste it (as others doe) in idle impertinencies,
 much

much lesse in surveying States and Kingdomes; It
is not for vs to sit vpon Crownes and thrones, and
to turne Statesmen ; it is for vs to be thankfull
where God blesses, and to be prayerfull when the
Church labours ; to this end I haue sayd thus
much; to perswade you to the practice of
what you know, now your turne fol-
lows, lets see what will be done,
and how well you will im-
proue time, in spea-
king to God ; ra-
ther then to,
or of men.
(::)

F I N I S.

First Anniversary

much like in living state and Kingdom; it
is not for us to in upon Government and
to make Government; it is for us to be thankful
where God blesses, and to be prayerful where the
Church labors; to this end I have said this
month, to persuade you to the practice of
what you know, now your time is
low, lest what will be done

and how well you will in-

prone time, in place

king to God; is-

then then to

of men.

(.)

F. I. M. I. S.

